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SUBJECT: UN COUNTER-TERRORISM TASK FORCE IN HIGH GEAR

[1](#)1. Action Requests paras 7 and 8.

[1](#)2. Summary: In a January 31 meeting with UN Assistant Secretary General Robert Orr, head of the Secretary General's

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Counter Terrorism Task Force (CTTF), Orr described current activities and future projects of the group. Orr said that he expects the Secretary-General to make an interim report to the General Assembly on Task Force activities, probably in March. He asked for U.S. support, political and financial, for its projects. End Summary.

[1](#)3. USUN Legal Officer met with Orr to review UN Secretariat counter terrorism activities since adoption last September of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. The Strategy "welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to institutionalize the Task Force in order to ensure overall coordination and coherence in the counter-terrorism efforts of the United Nations system." The Task Force, which has been meeting since 2006, includes representatives of the UN Secretariat and UN system entities engaged in various aspects

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of counter terrorism. Experts from the Security Council CT Committees are among the active participants in the group. Orr reported that plans to "institutionalize" the Task Force by setting up an office with a small staff (one D-2, one P-5, one secretary) await budget approval.

[1](#)4. In the meantime, the CTTF is functioning and has begun to identify areas on which to concentrate its efforts. The CTTF met in October and will have three meetings per year, the next in March. They have set up nine Working Groups to focus on specific areas of the Strategy. In selecting these areas, an effort was made to identify a task from each section of the Strategy that could be made operational within the year. The Task Force wants to be able to demonstrate results that reflect the Strategy's objectives.

[1](#)5. An initial project is the preparation of training materials on counter terrorism for use by Special Representatives of the Secretary General. An "On-line Handbook" is also being produced which, inter alia, will make available a list of CT related topics and identify offices and contact points within the UN system that deal with aspects of these matters. Orr also outlined plans to convene a meeting in Europe at which experts could discuss the problem of "radicalization". He hopes the meeting will "distill lessons" on how to deal with this problem, which has been identified as a condition conducive to the spread of terrorism.

[1](#)6. Orr mentioned that the US is particularly interested in concrete, results oriented activities and said that the Task Force Working Groups will be focusing on such issues as financing terrorism and CT technical assistance, particularly enhancing delivery. These topics are central to the work of

the Security Council's CT Committees and participation of experts from those Committees should ensure that the CCTF's work is consistent with that being undertaken by the SC. The chief of the SC 1267 Committee Monitoring Team will lead the Working Group on financing. Orr added that one "very real" issue is the use of the internet for terrorist activities. He noted that INTERPOL had urged stronger measures so that states could deal with such use of the internet in ways similar to those employed to combat its use for child pornography. Orr said that he envisions developing a list of "best practices" which states could use. USUN Legal Officer urged caution, reminding Orr (an American) that First Amendment considerations could create a situation of conflict between the U.S. and the Task Force on this issue.

17. What should be expected of member states? Orr elicited our views on what states should be asked to do to implement the strategy. Legal Officer noted the perennial call for states to become parties to the CT treaties and the importance of compliance with Security Council CT resolutions and promised to pass additional comments to Orr in the near future. Action Request: Orr has been very open to incorporating U.S. ideas into the Task Force's work and his request presents an opportunity to help shape the Strategy implementation plan. Please provide priorities for action by states ASAP.

18. Orr expressed the hope that the US would be supportive of the Secretary General's statement when he gives his interim report. He also asked for a financial contribution to fund the Task Force's work. He said that such a contribution could be targeted to a specific working group's activities. US participation, he said, would make a strong statement and attract other donors. Action Request. Department is requested to consider making such a contribution.

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